

INSPECTION REPORT

ST FRANCIS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gorton

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105529

Headteacher: Mrs L Frize

Lead inspector: Mrs S E Hall

Dates of inspection: 21st - 24th June 2004

Inspection number: 257649

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils: 3-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 162

School address: Ellenbrook Close
Gorton
Manchester
Postcode: M12 5LZ

Telephone number: 0161 2233457
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Fr R Aspden
governors:

Date of previous 18th May 1998
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This slightly smaller than average sized school is in an economically depressed area of Manchester that is below average in most socio-economic aspects. Fifty-two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is very high. Thirty pupils, which is a high proportion, speak English as an additional language, with a wide mix of home languages. Twenty-nine pupils, mainly with moderate learning difficulties, are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Eleven pupils have joined the school in the last two years and ten have left, which is an average proportion. There are seven pupils from refugee or asylum-seeking families and nine from Traveller families. Four pupils are in public care. The attainment of children on entry to the school is below average. An unusual feature is the high number of changes to the senior management team in the last two years. An associate headteacher is covering the maternity leave of the recently-appointed headteacher and there have been several changes to the usual teaching arrangements this year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21750	Mrs S E Hall	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Physical education English as an additional language Personal, social and health education and citizenship
9224	Mr M Vineall	Lay inspector	
8263	Mrs M Forsman	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology The Foundation Stage curriculum
32279	Mr R Hammerton	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography History Music Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is providing a **satisfactory** education for its pupils overall, but there are serious weaknesses in the achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 and in the management of the school. Standards are average at the age of seven, but below average by the time the pupils leave school. The quality of teaching is currently satisfactory overall, but there have been weaknesses in the teaching over time, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Leadership of the school is satisfactory and senior staff now have a vision and understanding of what has to be improved, but the management of the school is unsatisfactory. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money. While the school has rightly spent a lot of money on improving resources for pupils, this is not yet positively impacting on many pupils' achievement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school does not monitor and evaluate the quality of education it provides rigorously enough.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not achieve well enough and standards are too low.
- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and attain standards that are in line with national expectations.
- Staff do not make enough use of assessment information to plan activities to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities, especially in Years 3 to 6.
- The governance of the school is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well.
- The school is warm and welcoming to pupils, parents and visitors.
- In Years 1 to 6, standards in information and communication technology are below expectations.
- Levels of attendance are unsatisfactory.

Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory and, since that time, standards in Years 3 to 6 have fallen. Whilst some action was taken in the main areas identified in the previous report, this has been too little and most issues remain at least partially unresolved. The quality of education has started to improve since 2003 when the Local Education Authority began an intensive programme of support.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E*	E	E	D
Mathematics	E*	E	E	C

Science	E	D	E	D
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Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E* - very low. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Achievement is **unsatisfactory** overall. This is because pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not challenged on a regular enough basis and do not make the progress they are capable of.

Children enter the nursery with skills that are below average for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve well so that by the end of reception they meet the early learning goals, which are the targets they are expected to reach at this age, in all areas. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress overall, they achieve well and attain standards that are expected of them at the age of seven. However, in Years 3 to 6 over several years the quality of education provided has not been good enough and results in national tests have often been well below national averages. In 2003, standards at the age of 11 in English, mathematics and science were well below the national average. Compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment, standards were below average in English and science and average in mathematics. However, it must be noted that a significant proportion of pupils taking national tests at seven left the school before the age of 11, and a small number of other pupils joined. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are currently below average. Standards in information and communication technology are below average throughout the school. Pupils speaking English as an additional language and those with special educational needs generally make similar progress to their classmates.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory**. Their personal development is good, and the majority have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Relationships are good. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. Staff have a good understanding of the learning needs of young children and carefully plan a well balanced range of activities, including the regular use of outdoor play facilities, which helps the children develop their skills in all areas. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good. Planning is thorough and carefully done to ensure teaching builds in a continuous and progressive manner on what the pupils know, understand and can do. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is more variable. Whilst that seen during the inspection was satisfactory, the sample of pupils' work shows that over time, not enough has been expected of pupils and the currently better teaching is still not strong enough to plug the gaps in pupils' learning. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory, but the use of assessment information to plan work at an appropriately challenging level to match the needs of the pupils is unsatisfactory.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The quality of the accommodation is good overall with spacious accommodation, especially for the Foundation Stage. The quality of care of the pupils is good and pupils have good and trusting relationships with adults. However, there is no bilingual support for pupils speaking English as an additional language, which initially limits their learning. Links with parents and the community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **unsatisfactory** overall. The leadership of the school is currently satisfactory following a period of uncertainty and high staff turbulence. The new headteacher, currently on maternity leave, has worked hard to raise morale and enable the staff to develop a vision for improvement. The current associate headteacher is keeping a

watching brief over pastoral matters. The new assistant headteacher has potential and enthusiasm to develop aspects of the school's work for which she has responsibility. Management of the school is unsatisfactory because the school has not yet developed the roles of key staff or rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures that clearly indicate where there are weaknesses. Governance of the school is unsatisfactory. While the governing body is very supportive of the school and aware of its strengths, governors do not have a good enough grasp of areas of weakness.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally supportive of the school, although have rightly been concerned by the many staffing changes and lack of consistency and information about provision for their children. Pupils' views of the school are satisfactory, although some are concerned about the misbehaviour of a minority, and few speak with really warm affection for the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Develop rigour in the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school.
- Raise the standards attained and achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve the use of assessment information to match the level of difficulty in tasks to pupils' ability.
- Develop the quality of governance of the school to enable the governing body to be in a position to act as an effective critical friend.
- Raise standards in information and communication technology across the school.
- Improve levels of attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

The achievement of pupils is **unsatisfactory** overall. Achievement in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is good. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. At the age of 11, standards are **below average** in the core subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not achieve well enough in a wide range of subjects.
- Children in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 achieve well.
- Standards in information and communication technology are below average throughout the school.

Commentary

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the nursery with skills that are below average for their age in most areas of their early learning. Their speaking and listening skills are often limited and some children are very quiet and not very confident in their abilities. Because teaching is good in both the nursery and reception groups, children achieve well and make good progress, which is sometimes very rapid. The staff team works closely together and makes good use of the spacious internal and external accommodation. There is a good range of carefully planned activities that help children develop relevant skills in all aspects of their development so that by the time they leave reception they have generally achieved what is expected for their age in all the six areas of learning.

Key Stage 1

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.0 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.1 (15.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.3 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and attain standards that are expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. National tests reflect these findings. In 2003, standards were average in reading and mathematics, but slightly below the national average in writing. However, when compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, pupils achieved very well. Pupils did even better in tests in 2002 and the recent trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for all core subjects is above the national trend.

- Initially, some pupils in Years 1 and 2 are reluctant communicators. But staff provide good opportunities for pupils to take part in discussions where they are encouraged to talk about their experiences and ideas. Consequently, speaking and listening skills improve well and are in line with national expectations. Standards in reading are average at the age of seven and pupils learn to enjoy using big books and take pride in mastering the skills of reading. Pupils make good progress in writing. Standards are average with many carefully planned opportunities for pupils to write their thoughts and findings in other subjects, including science. Pupils make good progress in mathematics. They attain average standards and develop satisfactory skills in using numbers. Pupils have average skills in science and enjoy using the school grounds to find out about their environment, although some pupils are dependent upon staff for ideas of how to carry out investigations.

Key Stage 2

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	23.7 (25.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.1 (24.3)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	25.5 (27.4)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 22 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory because pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of. The sample of pupils' work and assessment information indicates that pupils make inconsistent progress as they move through the key stage, and overall this is unsatisfactory. Standards are currently below average. National tests in 2003 indicated that standards were well below national averages in English, mathematics and science. When compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, achievement was below average in English and science and average in mathematics. Over the last few years, standards have often been well below national averages. The trend in the school's average National Curriculum points score for all core subjects was below the national trend last year. Of particular concern is that when compared to similar schools in 2003, the value-added indicators show that the progress made by pupils from the age of seven to 11 was amongst the lowest five per cent of schools nationally. However, this is partially explained by the fact that the pupils who take the tests at 11 are not always the same as those who take them at seven. The proportion of pupils leaving the school has been quite high in some junior classes.
- In Years 3 to 6, pupils make some, but not enough, progress in English. A limiting factor is that many pupils do not establish a wide-ranging vocabulary, and several older pupils struggle to express themselves clearly. While a few pupils develop good reading skills, on the whole they do not acquire the higher order skills that help them make enough progress. Handwriting is often untidy and pupils rarely produce good quality work. In mathematics, pupils develop reasonable mental calculation skills, but these are sometimes slow and tortuous. In science, pupils do not have enough skills to decide what lines of investigation they want to follow.

6. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average throughout the school. Recently, the school developed an ICT suite, whose use is beginning to make an impact upon standards. Currently, achievement from a low base is satisfactory. However, there has been a shortfall in pupils' learning over a period of time and the limited use of classroom computers makes little impact in addressing the gaps in pupils' learning.
7. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar overall progress to the rest of their classmates. The school has links with the Local Education Authority who provide assessments for pupils either new to the school or those with continuing language needs. However, the school currently has no bilingual support for any of the 30 pupils who have a wide range of home languages. This affects the quality of care and support the school provides and does nothing to raise pupils' confidence and support their achievement. As the pupils become familiar with English, they often make good progress. Pupils with special needs achieve as well as their peers.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance remains **unsatisfactory**, but is now improving, as new initiatives are introduced. Attitudes to school are **good** and behaviour overall is **good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy good relationships with all adults and with each other.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to school and work, and show good learning habits in class.
- Behaviour, overall, is good and is aided by good provision for moral development, but can be less good at the top of the school.
- Whilst attendance levels have risen from last year's very low level, they remain below national norms and more could be done to improve them.

Commentary

8. An asset of the school, quickly spotted by any visitors, are the good and warm relationships between all those in the school. Pupils are mostly open and friendly and relate well to all adults in school who make up a close team. These relationships benefit the ethos of the school, the development of the children and teaching and learning.
9. Pupils show good, positive attitudes to school and to their work and play. They co-operate and share well, assisted by very clear sets of rules and values. Thus, several vigorous games of football are able to co-exist in the playground with very few disputes. Pupils often demonstrate good levels of responsibility, as in a Year 2 lesson where large equipment was sensibly and carefully put out and stowed away with minimal direction.
10. Behaviour is also good overall, although there are a number of disruptive individuals and, in Years 3 to 6, some pupils can forget the school's usual standards. The school is, however, predominantly a peaceful and harmonious place to be and the suggestions of oppressive behaviour from some parents were not reinforced by observations during the inspection, although some pupils were not in school during the week. There have been no exclusions during the last year.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/03 (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	9.5
National data:	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data:	0.9
National data:	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

- Attendance levels last year were very low in comparison with national levels and have fallen for three years. In the past twelve months, several new initiatives have been introduced, such as incentive schemes, awards for 100 per cent attendance and for best attending class of the week. This has resulted in some improvement. Authorised absence remains too high, however, and some four-fifths of this is recorded for medical reasons. There is a need to identify a single person with the time to focus on the drive for improved attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory** overall. The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. The provision for pupils' care, welfare and health is **good**. Links with parents are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory** overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is good, because staff provide a good level of challenge to pupils.
- In Years 3 to 6, staff do not make sufficient use of assessment information to inform the planning of work to match the needs of pupils of different abilities.

Commentary

- Since the last inspection, and particularly within the last year, there has been a high turnover of staff in parts of the school. This has undoubtedly had a destabilising affect on the learning of pupils in Years 3 to 6, with Year 3 being most affected. Parents have been particularly concerned about this, and inspectors are aware that the staffing arrangements observed were permanent in only three of the seven classes.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, as it was in the previous inspection. There is a good range of activities that encourage learning in directed tasks and through free and structured play. Support staff are well briefed and involved in planning and assessment activities. All staff have good awareness of the learning needs of young children. Planning is well thought through, and staff have benefited from the support of the Local Education Authority (LEA) in this area. All areas of learning are carefully

considered and well linked together to provide a balance of activities well matched to the children's ages and abilities. Good use is made of the spacious internal and external accommodation to support learning.

14. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good, as it was in the previous inspection. During the absence of the Year 2 teacher, good quality supply cover ensured that planned activities continued so that learning remained effective. Because of the good quality of teaching, pupils have done well in national tests for several years. Staff have good expectations of what the pupils can achieve and ensure tasks are organised to provide a good level of challenge.
15. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is currently satisfactory, but has declined since the previous inspection. Some pupils have had numerous teachers during this phase of their education. Supply and temporary staff in Years 3 and 5, and recently appointed staff in Year 6 are currently providing teaching that is at least satisfactory and sometimes better. Staff work hard to manage the disruptive behaviour of a small minority of pupils. However, discussions with pupils and parents and scrutiny of recent work show that teaching has not always been as effective. Over time, teaching in the junior classes has not provided sufficient challenge to move learning forward. There are gaps in pupils' learning throughout the key stage, and because of this, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Staff still do not always expect enough of pupils of all abilities.
16. Pupils with special educational needs learn as well as their classmates, and where additional support is provided this is often of good quality and supports learning well. The 30 pupils who speak English as an additional language have often arrived in school with limited English. Currently, the school does not provide any bilingual support for these pupils, although some has been available in the past and staff are liaising with the Local Education Authority to re-introduce such a programme. Overall, these pupils make satisfactory progress as they are often bright and well motivated pupils who are keen to learn, but they are sometimes very quiet and offer little to discussions.
17. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and have improved with the recent support of the LEA, which is currently providing a co-ordinator to handle and manage the information available. However, as yet the use of such information is unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6 because tasks are not matched to the level of pupils' ability. This has a negative impact on learning and is a key area for improvement. Pupils with special educational needs all have well written individual education plans, which identify appropriate learning steps and targets. Class teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils well and support them effectively in understanding the important teaching points and in growing in self confidence. As a result, their progress is as good as their peers. However, the individual targets are not always well enough used to provide focused, challenging tasks which could help these pupils to learn more quickly still. The academic progress of pupils with special needs is not currently tracked effectively enough.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 42 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2 (4.76%)	20 (47.6%)	20 (47.6%)	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum is **satisfactory**. The school provides **satisfactory** enrichment and extension to the curriculum. The accommodation and learning resources are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Over the long term, staff turnover has been high which has affected the quality of curriculum planning.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is good.
- The information and communication technology suite is a good resource.

Commentary

18. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage children is good, and reflects the national guidance for this age group. Planning takes full account of the early learning goals in each area of learning, and there is a good balance of formal and free-choice activities. The children's learning is enhanced by a variety of visitors and visits to places of local interest. Transition arrangements for children moving into the next key stage have been improved.
19. In Years 1 to 6, the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are implemented satisfactorily, together with a suitable range of booster and intervention initiatives. Lower-attaining pupils benefit from additional English and mathematics groups led by experienced learning support assistants. Junior aged pupils have access to a proper range of 'booster' classes. However, pupils throughout the school who are new to English currently have no bilingual support. This affects their access to a suitable curriculum.
20. Planning for the range of subjects is identified in a curriculum map that shows that all subjects are taught regularly. Although all subjects are offered, the higher skills are not always addressed and in some subjects such as art, the curriculum lacks breadth. The new computer suite is a good resource that is well used by all classes. The timetable for the use of the suite provides not only for information and communication technology (ICT) skills sessions but also for tasks enhancing literacy and numeracy through ICT. In some classes, sessions are also used for ICT in other subjects such as geography.
21. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is good in the Foundation stage and satisfactory in the other parts of the school. In recent years, however, there have been frequent staff changes, which have disrupted pupils' learning and had a major impact on the quality of education offered. The accommodation is good overall. The school has spacious grounds with well-defined areas for games and includes quiet areas of garden, which are maintained by pupils. Most classrooms are of a good size and are well organised. The outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage is spacious, well equipped and used regularly. However, the main school lacks a library at present because the room earmarked for the library is being used as a classroom and this has a negative impact on learning.

Care, guidance and support

The care of pupils is **good** and they are provided with **satisfactory** levels of support, advice and guidance. Pupils are **satisfactorily** involved in the decision-making processes of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good quality of care, which is applied according to pupils' individual needs.
- There are good induction processes into the Foundation Stage
- Good attention is paid to ensuring a safe, secure and progressively healthier environment for all pupils.
- There is currently no bilingual support for pupils speaking English as an additional language.

Commentary

22. Parents value and appreciate the caring nature of the school, which is one of its strengths. The attention to the individual needs of pupils is very evident and is built upon good relationships, and the good knowledge and understanding all adults display of each child. Such good care arises not only from class teachers, but also from all non-teaching staff. Examples of this latter feature is the work done to involve some pupils constructively in craft skills at lunchtimes and the way pupils who demonstrate aggression have been interested in gardening and, through this, demonstrate not only great responsibility, but real tenderness. However, pupils who speak English as an additional language have little support other than that within the classroom, which does little to boost their skills and self-esteem.
23. Good work is also done, despite the many recent changes of staff and responsibilities, to ensure the continuation of a safe and secure environment. Issues such as child protection, health and safety and first aid are well attended to and efficiently recorded where appropriate. The school is working towards the 'Healthy Schools' status and several examples were seen, including the presence of many small children consuming fruit. Pupils with special educational needs are known well to the staff and are treated with care and kindness.
24. The way children and parents are introduced into the school through the Foundation Stage, as well as how they move on to reception and Year 1 is particularly well organised and carried out. Not only are opportunities such as home visits included, but much imagination has been applied to creating 'picnics' and similar informal milestones to involve the families in education.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is **satisfactory**, with parents valuing the work and caring ethos of the school. Links with the community and other schools are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links exist with the Church and its congregation.
- Reports to parents give a good insight into pupils' strengths and weaknesses.
- Parents' views on the school are generally supportive, although the Year 3 issue damaged confidence, and communications to parents can be improved.

Commentary

25. Parents are supportive of the school and, in particular, value the way their children are happy and well cared for. They also praise the teaching and fair treatment of pupils. Parents are less positive about communication from the school and feel their concerns about Year 3 were not dealt with very well. Whilst inspectors found communications to home are satisfactory, these have not been used as well as they could to engage parents with the work going on. More could be done to give parents greater insights into their children's work and how it is taught, through written communication and face-to-face events. A notable exception is the quality of reports to parents which is consistently good, thorough and includes targets across all subjects. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted over the provision for their children. However, there is scope for the school to involve parents more widely and actively in supporting these pupils' learning.
26. Good links exist with the local Church and with its congregation, but links to the local community beyond this are limited. Some visits embrace local facilities, including museums, theatres and galleries, to enhance the curriculum, but more could be done to utilise the community in learning and more made of potential visitors into the school. Similarly, links with other educational organisations are generally limited to other Catholic schools. Whilst some sporting links extend these and the City Learning Centre is utilised, more links across the area could benefit the school in many ways.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Taken as a whole, leadership and management is **unsatisfactory**. The leadership of the school is **satisfactory**, but management is **unsatisfactory**. The governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The substantive headteacher gives a sense of leadership and direction for the school, which is respected by staff.
- There is insufficient clarity about how developments are to be managed and school improvement planning is not focused enough on raising standards.
- Governance is unsatisfactory because governors do not hold the school to account adequately and do not have a tight enough grip of their financial responsibilities.
- Procedures to secure improvements in teaching are not yet rigorous enough.
- The role of curriculum leaders as key staff is underdeveloped and unsatisfactory.
- The school is beginning to build a team of staff who want to succeed.

Commentary

27. There is some turbulence in the leadership and management of the school, which has had three headteachers in a year. At the time of the inspection, the newly-appointed substantive headteacher was on maternity leave and an associate head, seconded from another school, was in post. Even taking this into account, however, there remain systemic weaknesses in the way the school is managed.
28. The substantive headteacher provides satisfactory vision for school development, working with the newly-appointed deputy head, who has potential to develop her role further. Stability in staffing is a key aim for the school and some positive steps have been taken to achieve this. Teaching and support staff are committed to moving the school forward. Suitable new policies have been determined in several areas and significant quantities of good quality teaching resources have been purchased, which enhance the curriculum. A regular programme of lesson observations by senior staff

and external advisers, designed to monitor and enhance the quality of teaching, has been started. However, these observations, especially those carried out by school staff, are not yet rigorous enough. It is not possible to identify from them exactly what needs to be improved and whether any developments in teaching have resulted. Therefore, currently the leadership of other key staff is unsatisfactory.

29. The school improvement plan covers a broad range of areas and has been the subject of some consultation amongst staff and, to a lesser extent, governors. Creditably, it is a working document, which is widely available. However, it is not effectively prioritised or costed. It is not clear in its focus on raising standards and does not identify specifically enough how developments will be monitored and evaluated in terms of their impact on pupils' learning. In particular, the plan is not focused enough on the key priority of raising attainment in Years 3 to 6. The school receives a high level of support from staff of the Local Education Authority (LEA) in several areas and, indeed, is dependent on it. This external involvement is not shown in the school improvement plan, so there is insufficient clarity about how the work of the LEA links to the school's own actions or how the school evaluates its impact.
30. The substantive headteacher has appointed curriculum leaders for all subjects. She has introduced subject leaders' files, with suitable expectations about what should be included in them and actions that need to be taken. This ensures a satisfactory focus on every aspect of the curriculum. However, this is at a very early stage and subject leaders have limited time to carry out their duties. Therefore, for the most part, they do not have an accurate knowledge of standards, or the quality of teaching, in their subjects and management of the school is unsatisfactory. In most cases, staff are not sufficiently empowered or trained to lead the development of their subjects across the school, with too much being left to individual class teachers.
31. The leadership and management of special educational needs are satisfactory. Pupils on the special needs register have suitable targets and individual education plans, which are regularly reviewed. The school depends very much on Local Education Authority support for this, but a new special needs co-ordinator is about to take on the role to enable greater ownership by the school. Currently, no specific member of staff has an effective overview of support for pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language and the school provides little additional support for these pupils.
32. The governing body follows satisfactory procedures and fulfils all statutory obligations. It has an appropriate committee structure. Its members show a deep care for the school and all the pupils and staff. However, governors are insufficiently aware of, or engaged with, the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher's reports to the governing body, over a long period of time, have not been clear about standards of pupils' attainment or how areas for development in the school are being addressed. Although the governing body has been told formally by the Local Education Authority that the school is causing concern, governors do not insist that the issues identified by the authority should be addressed robustly by the school or discuss these matters formally in their meetings. The statutory targets, agreed by the governing body, for pupils' attainment in English and mathematics are too low. In respect of their financial responsibilities, governors know that the expenditure per pupil is high, due to the sensible reduction of a very high balance carried forward from the previous financial year. They are not as clear, however, about how this money is being spent, especially in terms of the costs of staffing, and how efficiently the available finance is being used. They are not able, therefore, to identify accurately whether or not the school provides value for money.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	551 682
Total expenditure	617 251
Expenditure per pupil	3 674

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	118 909
Balance carried forward to the next	53 340

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

33. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, particularly in language and social skills. Nursery children listen to adults, but some are reluctant to express themselves or to attract notice. Children make good progress in the nursery and reception years and overall their achievement is good. At the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, the majority of children meet the goals they are expected to reach in all areas of learning. There is a warm, friendly ethos with lots of praise, reassurance and encouragement, but this warmth does not distract from the purpose of learning. Children develop positive attitudes to learning, and clearly feel that school is a good place to be.
34. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. Planning is comprehensive and detailed in all aspects and ensures that the recommended curriculum is followed. Teachers show a good understanding of how young children learn and are supported by knowledgeable and experienced assistants. A good range of activities are provided and managed effectively. Adults employ good strategies for the management of the children and ensure that they know what behaviour is expected of them.
35. The curriculum is matched by the ongoing assessment provided by the Foundation Stage profile. All staff are involved in informal monitoring and observations. Assessment is secure and is being refined as staff expertise develops. Procedures ensure that there is early identification of children with special educational needs. The curriculum is good, particularly in the provision for outdoor play. This has been the focus of considerable recent development and is an integral part of daily learning.
36. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good and there is strong teamwork throughout. The Foundation Stage has been reorganised and remodelled this year so that some features have not been tested over a full year, but so far are working well. The 'key worker' approach to teaching ensures that groups are small and the challenge appropriate for each child. The provision is monitored closely and the co-ordinator is swift to act if areas for improvement are identified. A feature of the evaluation process is the weight given to children's opinions. Induction arrangements are good. Transition between the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has been improved and there is regular liaison between the relevant staff. The complexities of the job sharing arrangement are managed successfully. At the time of the last inspection in 1998, the provision for the children under five years old was considered good. In 2003, HMI reported adversely on the provision. The areas identified then have been addressed successfully and improvement has been good overall.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ethos of the Foundation Stage encourages confidence and social behaviour.

Commentary

37. This area of learning is rightly given a high profile from the beginning of the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The good relationships evident throughout the Foundation Stage help children to achieve well from their entry level in the nursery. Both nursery and reception staff encourage social behaviour through friendship, for example by asking children to get a friend to help in a game. Children co-operate well in sharing equipment and taking turns. In snack times, children listen to each other as they talk about their morning's work. The positive atmosphere of the Foundation Stage builds children's self-esteem. They are aware of their achievements and are confident that they are valued. Most children attain the expected targets for their age by the time they enter Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills improve well over the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

38. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. Planning clearly identifies each teaching focus and all learning objectives. The short focused activities suit the age of the children. The good speech modelled by staff encourages vocabulary development and is especially helpful to children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. Speaking skills in the nursery are often limited to single words, short phrases or abbreviated sentences. Word recognition is still limited, but most children pick out their names from class name cards. By the end of the reception year, children are writing their own names, using phonic skills to build words and building up a sight vocabulary. Most are keen to talk and can sustain a conversation, although they occasionally struggle for the right words. The majority attain the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1 and achieve well from their entry level in the nursery.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Practical activities and classroom routines promote regular use of mathematical knowledge.

Commentary

39. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Short enjoyable sessions with their teacher in the nursery steadily extend children's awareness of numbers and recognition of colours. Reception children are confident in counting and ordering numbers to ten at least and have begun recording addition. Some higher-attaining children enjoy writing sums independently and tackle subtraction up to five accurately. The remodelled Foundation Stage classrooms now include dedicated numeracy areas where resources are constantly available. This encourages children to explore number and aspects of mathematics independently in their free choice time. All adults involved in

the Foundation Stage use discussion with children well so that they volunteer their observations such as the way the skittles are laid out in a triangle and the number of people in the water play. Most children attain the expected goals by the end of reception and achieve well from their entry level in the nursery.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outdoor areas provide good resources for appreciation of the world around the school.
- Foundation Stage children have weekly lessons in the computer suite.

Commentary

40. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The youngest children are familiar with the computer keyboard and mouse and the older children cope well with reinforcement programs. Children's awareness of past and present is extended from nursery children's understanding of how they grew to reception children's appreciation that their locality was not always as it is now. Comparing their modern parish with the listed Monastery of St Francis provided an appreciable contrast. The accuracy of models children build from junk shows how they have been encouraged to observe the real world closely. Practical experiences such as cooking are well chosen to stimulate children's questions and provide discussions. The majority of children achieve well and attain the expected goals by the time they leave reception.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use of the outdoor facilities encourages children to develop confidence in gross motor skills.

Commentary

41. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Both age groups benefit from sessions for dance and physical education in the main school hall. Older children move with confidence and imagination and show awareness of others. The use of the outdoor area is identified and planned on a weekly basis so that there is variety and purpose in the activities. The range of classroom activities encourages children to improve their control of tools such as scissors and brushes. Good quality adult support ensures that children are well monitored and helped as necessary. Most children achieve well and attain the expected goals by the time they leave reception.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Music lessons are well planned and delivered.

Commentary

42. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Music sessions led by the teaching assistant are particularly suitable for young children. They promote not only early music awareness, but also discrimination in listening. The youngest children are aware that their voices can show different emotions and they demonstrate laughing, crying, shouting and whispering styles well. Older children are able to sustain imaginative roles such as the jobs of the ticket collector and driver at the train station. They are beginning to be selective in the materials and colours they choose for painting and collage. Most children achieve well and attain the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Systems for assessing, tracking and targeting pupils' progress are not robust enough and, as a result, the achievement of pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is not good enough.
- By age 11, standards are below national expectations.
- Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good and these pupils achieve well.
- The subject leader has some clear ideas for improvement and has begun to plan worthwhile changes.

Commentary

43. In Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading tests in 2003 was in line with the national average. In writing, standards were below average. In both cases, when compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, standards were well above average. This represents a clear improvement over the previous two years and reflects the standards seen in the previous inspection. Evidence shows that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. In writing, this indicates a further improvement from 2003. Overall in Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well in English.
44. In Year 6, in the 2003 national tests, standards in English were well below the national average and below average when compared to similar schools. Pupils' progress, comparing standards in Year 2 and Year 6, was poor. Inspection evidence shows that standards at age 11 are below average and have fallen since the previous inspection. There has been some recent improvement, but pupils' progress is still not rapid enough in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in Year 3 have made particularly slow progress during staff changes. Overall achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory.

45. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 carry out a good range of English work. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is well structured, suitably paced and carefully focused. As a result, pupils speak, read and write with reasonable confidence. They usually listen attentively. Individual needs are generally recognised and catered for. Assessment information is not used well enough to target challenging work to all pupils. This means that some higher-attaining pupils do not always do as well as they could. Pupils are given helpful feedback on their written work in class and through teachers' marking. Reading records are carefully maintained and well used. Teaching assistants provide effective, well-planned support. These pupils make good progress overall, although those speaking English as an additional language have no bilingual support. This initially limits their progress, although many catch up quickly and make similar progress to their classmates.
46. Teaching and learning are currently satisfactory in Years 3 to 6, where a satisfactory range of work is covered and the National Literacy Strategy is well established as a framework for teaching. For example, pupils have the opportunity to write in a wide range of styles and for different purposes. Staff manage behaviour well and are very positive in their dealings with pupils. Whole-class teaching is generally clear, lively and encouraging. This means that, in most lessons, there is a good atmosphere for learning and most pupils work hard and are keen to succeed.
47. The sample of recent work indicates that over time, and to some extent still, teachers' expectations have not always been high enough. Tasks are often not well enough planned, using assessment information, to really challenge each pupil. Too often, all members of each class do similar work and pupils' individual targets are not always sufficiently demanding. The quality of marking is variable and pupils do not always receive clear enough guidance as to how they can improve their work. There is no bilingual support for pupils speaking English as an additional language, which limits their initial learning.
48. Aspects of reading are taught satisfactorily, but in a number of different ways across the school, according to individual teachers' preferences. Approaches taken to record and assess pupils' progress vary from teacher to teacher, which makes continuity between classes more difficult. Each class has a slightly different system for sending books home and for parents to make comments. Whilst each method used can be individually effective, the lack of consistency is confusing to pupils and reduces progress, especially in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum leader has recognised this issue in an audit of practice throughout the school and has begun to make some initial changes.
49. The curriculum leader is new to the position and provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. Having carried out some effective monitoring and evaluation, she has correctly identified improvements needed in the teaching of English, particularly in relation to consistency, assessment and challenge. At the time of the inspection, she was beginning to formulate further plans and had made some good initial changes. For example, teachers have been involved in making accurate assessments of pupils' writing, which have been moderated to ensure accuracy. Although at an early stage, these plans provide a suitable starting point for future development.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. The development of literacy across the curriculum is unsatisfactory as there is no systematic method for using writing and other literacy skills in a range of subjects. Arrangements are left to individual teachers. This means that opportunities for pupils to

develop and apply skills they have learned in English lessons are sometimes missed. The newly-appointed subject leader for English has identified this as an area for development but has not had the time to make a specific plan to deal with it.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improving trend in Years 1 and 2 is not matched in Years 3 to 6 where standards are below average.
- Significant support from the Local Education Authority has contributed to improvements in teaching.

Commentary

51. On the basis of the 2003 end of Year 2 national test results, pupils' attainment is in line with the national average, and is well above average in comparison with similar schools. Recent test results show an upward trend. The 2003 end of Year 6 results show that pupils' attainment is well below the national average and average compared to similar schools. Based on their prior attainment, the pupils' performance is very low, showing that this group of pupils did not make the progress expected of them. Standards have shown no significant improvement in recent years and do not match the improvement seen in Year 2.
52. Inspection findings are that standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations. At the end of Year 6, standards are below national expectations. A significant minority of pupils does not reach expected levels, and only a small number of pupils exceed them. The present curriculum is satisfactory. Planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy, and the new monitoring regime is intended to ensure that the curriculum is delivered in full. Historically, this has not been the case and there have been gaps in the provision. Appropriate calculation and recording strategies, for example, have not been covered in sufficient depth in some year groups.
53. Achievement is good for pupils at the end of Year 2. Their understanding across all aspects of the subject is satisfactory and they are beginning to apply their knowledge to problems. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. Pupils in most year groups demonstrate gaps in their basic skills and lack confidence in using their knowledge. The performance of pupils with special educational needs and those learning to speak English as an additional language matches that of other groups. Pupils' attitudes are good overall. Most pupils co-operate well and persevere with their tasks. This is most evident in classes where teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their work. However, many of the Year 6 pupils do not operate at the expected level because their recall, calculation and strategic skills are patchy. Time is lost because teachers have to go back over aspects from earlier years and pupils miss the chance to work at higher levels, for example in use of formulae, percentages, and data interpretation. Pupils lack confidence in identifying the essential elements in dealing with word problems.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2, and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teaching of the older pupils has improved recently with changes of staff and with the support of the Local Education Authority. However, the sample of recent work indicates that over the long term, teaching in Years 3 to 6 has often been

unsatisfactory. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is distinguished by effective marking and clear direction to pupils for improvement. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is now carefully planned and staff are working hard to ensure an appropriate level of challenge is offered to all groups. However, over time, the good grounding in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 has not been built on progressively. For example, the present Year 3 cohort has not been offered the proper breadth of the subject or been challenged satisfactorily, and this has impacted on their learning. At the time of the inspection, teachers were effective in recognising and addressing areas of weakness and in providing additional support.

55. Assessment is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The use of assessment over the long term has been unsatisfactory and has not been employed to improve standards. Information from optional tests in the middle years of the juniors and from class assessments has informed grouping in lessons but has not been used rigorously enough to set specific targets. In the present school year, new procedures have been introduced which are having a positive impact on learning.
56. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has initiated a number of new approaches and is working closely with colleagues and the Local Education Authority consultant to improve provision. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory because the monitoring and evaluation practices are not yet embedded, and their effect has still to be seen. At present, these practices are undertaken by the Local Education Authority and not by the school itself. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and teachers are able to use the new computer suite for numeracy reinforcement lessons. The improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory, as standards in Years 3 to 6 have not improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are few sustained instances of pupils using mathematics in other areas. In science lessons, there are some opportunities for pupils in both key stages to take measurements. The use of charts and graphs for recording results is limited. There are missed opportunities for pupils to use higher mathematics skills, for example in information and communication technology lessons.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well because teaching is good and pupils record their findings in a variety of ways.
- In Years 3 to 6, achievement is unsatisfactory and teachers do not make enough use of assessment information to match the level of work to pupils' abilities.
- The leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

58. Standards in the previous inspection were in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Whilst these standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2, standards have fallen in Years 3 to 6 and are now below average. The 2003 national

tests for pupils aged 11 indicate that standards were well below the national average and below the average of schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals.

59. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. When children start school they often have limited knowledge and understanding of the world around them. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress because tasks are carefully planned to cover all the appropriate areas and they are provided with a good range of activities where they record what they find out and observe in their own words. Pupils have good opportunities to use the school's extensive grounds to make observations of life and living things, which interests them and motivates them to try hard in their work.
60. Standards are below average at the age of 11, and in Years 3 to 6 pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. Their understanding of life processes, materials and their properties and of physical processes are below average. Pupils struggle to understand the factors they need to consider when planning an experiment and are even more reliant than younger pupils on staff for ideas.
61. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. Here, staff plan practical experimental tasks well so that pupils have opportunities such as rolling cars down different ramps to observe for themselves what happens when they alter different factors. Staff have good expectations of these pupils who are encouraged to make careful observations, such as the variation between different types of plants when identifying similarities and differences.
62. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 is currently satisfactory, although there have been weaknesses over time and staff have to work hard to plug the gaps in pupils' learning. In Years 3 to 6, teachers plan activities carefully and are keen that older pupils are able to identify what experiments they need to plan in order to carry out specific investigations. Teachers ask a good range of questions and explain things well. Staff have good relationships with pupils and encourage all, including those with behavioural difficulties, to try hard. However, some teachers do not expect enough of pupils on a consistent basis and do not build the skills they need to apply in experimental tasks on a step-by-step basis. Over time, staff have not made enough use of assessment information to plan activities to provide a suitable level of challenge.
63. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. There is currently no subject co-ordinator in place. Whilst the associate headteacher has a watching brief of the subject, she has organised no sampling of pupils' work or carried out any monitoring of teaching or learning, and is therefore not in a position to help identify areas of weakness or to help staff to improve their teaching. There has not been enough improvement since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' experiences of the subject have been disrupted over the long term.
- The achievement of all groups of pupils has improved over the present school year.
- Major improvement in resources and accommodation has benefited pupils' learning.

Commentary

64. Standards at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are below national expectations. However, pupils are now attaining expected standards in some aspects of the subject, for example in presenting ideas and information, but many pupils have gaps in their knowledge and have missed learning essential skills. Achievement by pupils throughout the school is currently satisfactory because of the recent improvement in their rate of progress. Until this last year, achievement was unsatisfactory. Regular teaching, a progressive curriculum and access to high quality resources have enabled pupils of all ages to make significant progress this year.
65. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. When given the access to use satisfactory resources, pupils learn quickly and confidently apply skills to new situations. Year 4 pupils are able to use generic skills to make and extend branching databases and some Year 1 pupils show above average understanding in writing instructions to control a simulation.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is now satisfactory in both key stages. However, other evidence indicates that over the long term, teaching has been unsatisfactory. Younger pupils use word processing and graphics programs, but their skills have not been developed progressively. The oldest pupils are able to present information in different forms, use the Internet for research, and use simulations. However, they have not experienced the full coverage of the programmes of study in areas such as multimedia, data-handling and control, and have gaps in their basic skills. Units of work have not always been completed in full so that pupils have not reached the most challenging aspects. Current staff are working hard and using opportunities to make up some of the missing areas.
67. The curriculum is satisfactory. A progressive scheme is in place, which covers all the requirements of the programmes of study. The school has the resources to deliver most of the curriculum and has linked with another school to provide some elements, such as writing procedures for control. There is a lack of resources for the sensing and music units of work in Years 3 to 6.
68. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been the driving force behind the many improvements in the subject provision this year. The school now has a modern computer suite in regular use. Planning has been improved and is matched with comprehensive workbooks for each unit. However, assessment is unsatisfactory as no procedures are in place at present. Management of the subject is less well developed and unsatisfactory as procedures for monitoring and evaluation of performance have still to be introduced. Currently, there are no means of scrutinising the progress of year groups or the coverage of the curriculum. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory with some good aspects. Although standards are still below expectations overall, pupils are reaching expectations in some aspects of the

subject. There has been a major improvement in all resources and the subject has a high profile in the school.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory, but not yet fully embedded in school practice. The timetable for the use of the new computer suite provides not only for development of skills but also for sessions to enhance literacy and numeracy through ICT. In some classes, sessions are also used to support other subjects, such as art and science. Pupils have incidental access to computers in their classrooms for shorter tasks, but these are not always used well enough.

HUMANITIES

As a church aided school, **religious education** was not covered in this inspection.

70. Insufficient evidence was gained in the inspection to make a secure judgement about provision in geography or history. However, scrutiny of pupils' work in both subjects indicates that standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and below national expectations at the end of Year 6. In **geography**, pupils have carried out an interesting range of work, though there is limited evidence of this being specifically matched to pupils' particular abilities. Marking is reasonably thorough. However, older pupils use too many worksheets, which restrict their opportunity to think for themselves. There is only limited evidence of fieldwork or geographical enquiries, in which pupils should find out about places using investigational techniques. In **history**, younger pupils have covered a good range of work, and work is well marked which helps pupils to improve. Older pupils can answer some factual questions about the past, but are not able to interpret and analyse this information clearly.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

71. No lessons were taught in **art and design** during the inspection. It is therefore not possible to make judgements about overall provision, standards and achievement, teaching or learning. The sample of pupils' recent work indicates a broadly satisfactory but narrow curriculum in place, with relatively few opportunities for pupils to develop skills other than in drawing and painting. There is little work that is really imaginative, bold or technically demanding. There appears to have been little teaching of specific skills and techniques, including drawing, to enable pupils to produce higher quality work. There is little evidence of pupils producing designs for their work or of evaluating the quality of their finished pieces. There are, however, some exceptions to this in the quality of work produced in liaison with artists in residence connected to the local monastery trust. As in other subjects, the co-ordinator has had few opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, and this has allowed a narrowing of the curriculum to occur. The school has recently undertaken some in-service training on the display of pupils' work. However, more remains to be done to raise the profile of the subject across the school.
72. Insufficient evidence was gained to make a secure judgement about provision in **music**, though, in the inspection, a good lesson was observed in Year 3. Discussion with staff and pupils indicates there is evidence of inconsistent practice from class to class, though the recent adoption of a new music scheme is beginning to remedy this. Pupils

sing well in assemblies and there are some opportunities for extracurricular work and instrumental teaching. Good resources, including a range of instruments, are available.

Design and Technology

Provision in design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy their work in the subject.
- The subject is not well enough managed, with too much being left to individual class teachers.

Commentary

73. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language, enjoy their design and technology work. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily and some younger pupils achieve well. Those in Years 1 and 2 reach national expectations. They take part in a satisfactory range of activities, which they remember well months later. Most Year 2 pupils can select simple tools, explain what they are doing and make simple evaluations. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attain average standards and develop their skills effectively in making realistic plans and using equipment correctly. Year 4 pupils describe sensibly how they have made improvements to their work based on evaluations. Many Year 6 pupils consider their designs carefully in relation to the intended purpose of whatever they are producing, and all pupils show suitable accuracy in their measurements and plans.
74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Lessons are often stimulating and motivating. Some good and very good features of teaching were seen in the inspection, especially where pupils were allowed freedom to develop their ideas. In some lessons, conversely, not enough freedom to make choices about their work was given to pupils. A current area for development of the teaching is that, in many topics, too much emphasis is currently put on design rather than practical making, and this limits pupils learning.
75. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked purposefully to ensure design and technology has a fairly high profile in the school and the subject receives a suitable amount of teaching time. The curriculum is based upon national guidance. All teachers work hard to interpret the curriculum in their own classes, without adequate guidance or support. It is mainly this effort on their part, rather than whole school management, which enables pupils to achieve well. Management is unsatisfactory because the subject leader is not in a position to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning or to identify correctly how high the standards are. The school has clear plans to improve the quality of leadership and management and has appointed a new subject leader from September 2004. In the subject, as a whole, there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection as standards have been maintained.

Physical Education (PE)

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy PE lessons and most try to improve their skills.
- The subject co-ordinator has few opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.

Commentary

76. Standards in PE are average for the ages of the pupils throughout the school. This indicates a dip since the previous inspection when standards were above average. The majority of pupils reach the minimum requirements in swimming. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and those in Years 3 to 6 achieve satisfactorily. The majority of the lessons observed were opportunities for pupils to practise their dance skills. Pupils enjoy these activities and most are able to move in a variety of ways, sometimes using their bodies rhythmically to different music. However, some older pupils have only basic movement skills and find it difficult to create mood and use their bodies in an expressive manner. The level of fitness of some pupils is low which limits the effort they put into their work and the standards they achieve. The school works hard to provide extra kit for pupils who regularly do not have this in order that they do not miss lessons on a frequent basis. When using gymnastic apparatus, young pupils show good awareness of safety and get out and put away the apparatus well.
76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and are good in Years 1 and 2. Staff are enthusiastic and in Years 1 and 2 make demands on pupils that move their levels of skill forward. Here, good use is made of other pupils to demonstrate their good work to others. Staff sometimes join in with the pupils, which acts as a good role model. However, some staff in Years 3 to 6 do not have high levels of subject knowledge and understanding and do not provide enough direct teaching of how pupils can improve their skills. Occasionally, staff do not demand enough of older pupils. This leads to some lessons where pupils 'mark time' and do not make enough progress. The school organises some football lessons taken by a local student; this teaching is ineffective and more suited to the capabilities of much older pupils.
77. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator works satisfactorily with colleagues to ensure coverage of the curriculum and organises extracurricular activities. Amongst the satisfactory range of additional activities are football and netball coaching, with some pupils developing good levels of skill in netball and representing local schools. Management of the subject is, however, unsatisfactory, as the co-ordinator does not have enough opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. This has led to a presumption that skills are still at the level seen in the previous inspection, which is no longer the case and has failed to identify where staff need support in order to raise pupils' skill levels.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

78. The school gives suitable emphasis to the development of the whole child, which is evident in the ethos of the school and all aspects of school life. This interest in their personal development pleases parents, who feel their children are well supported. However, there is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements about provision in

this area. There is a clear emphasis on pupils accepting responsibility for their actions and adapting their behaviour accordingly. There is a programme for personal, social and health education and pupils from reception upwards take part in 'circle time' discussions. These activities provide pupils with satisfactory opportunities for discussion about their thoughts, feelings and interests, and help pupils to develop their self-esteem.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	5
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	4

The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).